
TOWN WARRANT
Special Town Meeting
June 10, 2004

The meeting was televised by Amherst Community Television and shown on the Government Channel. The Special Town Meeting was called to order by the Moderator, Harrison Gregg at 7:41 p.m. There were 234 town meeting members. 118 checked in and a quorum was declared. The call and return of the warrant was read by the Town Clerk, Anna Maciaszek. Article 1 was considered on June 10, 2004.

Article 1. Discriminatory Foreign Student Fee Resolution (Burry)
VOTED Yes 78, No 29 that the Town adopt the following resolution:

Discriminatory Foreign Student Fee Resolution

“Whereas, in early December 2003 officials at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst announced a new \$65 per semester fee to be charged only to international students,

And, whereas, this fee affects approximately 300 undergraduate students and 1,300 graduate students,

And, whereas, approximately 1,000 of the 1,300 effected graduate students are Graduate Student employees, and, therefore, members of the Graduate Employee Organization, UAW Local 2322,

And, whereas, this new fee was imposed unilaterally without any consultation with the Graduate Employee Organization or the Graduate Student Senate,

And, whereas, this discriminatory foreign student fee took effect in the spring 2004 semester, only two months after it was announced, thereby imposing an immediate financial burden on international students, who in almost all cases are forbidden by federal law from working off campus,

And, whereas, this discriminatory fee is the result of managerial and budgetary decisions made solely by University of Massachusetts at Amherst administrators, acting under the authority and direction of Chancellor John Lombardi,

And, whereas, the Graduate Employee Organization has worked for the repeal of this new unilaterally imposed fee,

And, whereas, a large number of international graduate students have refused to pay this new fee, thereby putting themselves at risk of administrative withdrawal from the University,

And, whereas, administrative withdrawal would result in loss of academic standing and loss of employment for Graduate Student Employees,

And, whereas, and in many cases, administrative withdrawal would also result in loss of housing for graduate student employees and their families,

And, whereas, the University is obliged to report all withdrawn international students to the federal government within 21 days of their being administratively withdrawn,

And, whereas, international students withdrawn from the University are de facto in violation of their student visa status, and, put themselves at risk of immediate deportation,

And, whereas, the Amherst Human Rights Commission has found the foreign student fee to be discriminatory and a violation of the human rights of students singled out on the basis of their visa status and country of origin,

Now, therefore, be it resolved, that the Amherst Representative Town Meeting call upon Chancellor Lombardi, acting on behalf of the University of Massachusetts, to 1) immediately repeal the new \$65 per semester international student fee; 2) find alternative funding sources to support the University’s International Programs Office; and 3) offer amnesty to all international student fee resisters, absolving them of any penalty, financial or otherwise, for having refused to pay this unilaterally imposed discriminatory fee,

And be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be sent to Chancellor Lombardi; to University of Massachusetts President Jack Wilson; to University of Massachusetts Board of Trustees Chair, Grace Fey; to the members of the University of Massachusetts Board of Trustees; to State Representative Ellen Story; to State Senator Stan Rosenberg; to Congressperson John Olver; and to United States Senators Edward Kennedy and John Kerry.”

Action taken on 6/10/04.

9:14 p.m. The business of the warrant was completed and the meeting voted to dissolve. 124 members checked in.

Attest:

Anna M. Maciaszek
Town Clerk